

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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R 141738Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9527
INFO USMISSION NATO
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
DIA WASHDC
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA
COMUSFORAZ LAJES FLD AZORES
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BRUSSELS BEL

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MARR PINT PO
SUBJECT: AZORES BASE NEGOTIATIONS: SOARES AND SA CARNEIRO
TRADE BARBS

REF: LISBON 8369 (DTG 031754Z DEC 76)

1. SOARES AND SA CARNEIRO SQUARE OFF: IN ANATIONALLY
TELEVISED POST-ELECTION ROUNDTABLE DEC 13, SOCIALIST LEADER
MARIO SOARES AND HIS SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC COUNTERPART, SA CARNEIRO,
ENGAGED IN A HEATED DISCUSSION OF GOVERNMENT POLICY
TOWARD THE AZORES. TRIGGER FOR THE DEBATE WAS THE SOARES
ASSERTION THAT THE LOCAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN HAD REVEALED THERE
WERE LESS THAN FULL LIBERTIES IN THE ISLANDS. SA CARNEIRO
COUNTERED BY CHARGING THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WITH CAUSING
DIFFICULTIES FOR THE PSD-CONTROLLED REGIONAL GOVERNMENT. HE
CITED AS AN EXAMPLE THE GOVERNMENT'S REFUSAL TO COVER
THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT'S BUDGET DEFICIT. SOARES RESPONDED
BY POINTING OUT THAT THE NEEDS OF THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT WERE
ONE OF MANY PRESSING CLAIMS UPON AVAILABLE REVENUES. SOARES
LATER NOTED THAT CABINET HAD THAT SAME DAY AGREED TO CONSIDER
MEETING THE DEFICIT.

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2. LAJES NOT A NEGOTIATING PAWN: ECHOING ASSERTIONS BY

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT PRESIDENT MOTA AMARAL, SA CARNEIRO
CRITICIZED THE "INJUSTICE" OF USING THE LAJES BASE TO OBTAIN
LOANS WHICH WERE OF NO DIRECT BENEFIT TO THE AZORES.
SOARES DENIED THAT THE INTERESTS OF THE AZORES WERE BEING
SACRIFICED. HE POINTED OUT THAT NO BASE TALKS WERE UNDER
WAY AND THAT CURRENT LOAN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES
WERE A SEPARATE ISSUE. COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER CUNHAL CHIMED
IN, STRESSING THAT GIVEN THE MILITARY, DIPLOMATIC, AND
POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS, ONLY THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WAS IN A
POSITION TO NEGOTIATE RE LAJES. CDS LEADER FREITAS DO AMARAL,
THE FOURTH ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANT, DID NOT COMMENT.
CARLUCCI

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